



## Myanmar Jungle Schools - Myanmar

**Budget:** Year 1 funded. Year 2 (of 2): \$20,540, \$10,000 needed.

### The Project:

The project supports teachers and some educational materials at two schools in Myanmar with a total of 450 students. The schools are located in Myanmar near the Thai/Burma border area. Internally displaced people and refugee families have lived along this area in camps, often for many years. After years of unrest and destruction by civil unrest and war, families are cautiously returning to villages to start again with little or no resources to support themselves. This is the 2nd report (end of year 1).



### Update:

- A significant difficulty for Karen tribe people returning to their homeland is the complete lack of infrastructure due to many years of civil war and unrest between the Burmese military and the Karen people, who desire independence. As a result, schools are starting from scratch and it is very difficult to retain teachers, particularly if they are paid a very low wage or not at all. Due to the funding from Entrust we are pleased to report that all 28 teachers have remained in their roles since the last report was made. This stability and consistency is important for the 417 students attending the schools, and is a good indication the teachers are receiving fair wages. Previous student levels (445) were revised after a census showed more accurate figures
- To provide for students travelling long distances, basic dormitories have been built to encourage students to persevere in their education. Our partners report that student numbers remain very steady with parents and students seeing the value in what the schools are trying to achieve and the importance of education
- The schools are highly dedicated to making education available to children in the nearby villages and to improving the quality of education through strong collaboration with the partner school, Thoo Mweh Learning Centre, located just over the border in Thailand. One of the highlights has been a summer English camp, where students from the partner school worked together with some of the teachers from the jungle school to teach English, computer and music to the village children. Another jungle school sent two teachers for a week-long teacher training workshop organized by the partner school and another host school
- The two schools are planning increases in staff and types of classes offered, as well as extending the number of grades taught over the next few months

One teacher, Crystal, describes how Entrust's support has helped her, *"I have been teaching for six years. Your support now helps me in my travelling and other needs. Moreover, it is beneficial for education. Even though I come from a place far away, I don't have to face problems because of your help. Thank you so much."* Our partners add, *"We hope that the community will be inspired to regard teaching as an important job that can also serve as a possible career alternative for the students in the future."*

Project Manager Jenny Crameri visited one of the schools in February. She said, *"It is encouraging to see the village community getting behind the teachers and supporting them. Many parents help out by providing rice to the teachers throughout the year. The teachers feel appreciated and welcomed by the community which in turn leads them to feel more invested in the children they teach"*.

**Thank you for your support enabling teachers to improve the lives of children and give them a future hope.**